

WHITCHURCH ON THAMES PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Whitchurch-on-Thames Parish Council meeting held at the Village Hall

Thursday 8.00pm 21st March 2019

Present

Chairman – Cllr Jim Donahue

Vice Chair – Cllr Rachel Hatcher

Councillors – Cllr Warren Beard

Cllr Keith Brooks

Cllr Rachel Hatcher

Cllr Katherine Higley

Clerk – Ina Chantry

Members of the public – Diana Smith, Mel Taylor, Robin Maccaw, Will Barclay, John Bradon, Richard Wingfield, Rachel Grocott.

1. Apologies

Cllr Dave Bowen sent his apologies.

2. Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Public forum

None.

4. Agree minutes and review open actions

- i. The minutes for the 21st February 2019 were agreed and signed off as a true record.
- ii. PC46 / 83 – Consent for names and contact details for councilors to go on website, names of parishioners involved in working groups to go on website. The parish clerk is still awaiting consent from one or two residents. It was agreed the information would include councilor email and name only Cllr Donahue and the clerk agreed their mailing addresses could be public. Cllr Higley advised a review date needed to be agreed for the privacy notice.
- iii. PC54 – Village maintenance and grass cutting. A second quote had been obtained and was more expensive than Azalea Landscapes. It was agreed Azalea Landscapes would continue with the village maintenance contract. He would also be asked to cut once a week in the growing season at £165 per extra cut. The Cricket Club have agreed to pay for up to three of the extra cuts, therefore the maximum extra cost to the parish council would be £825 per year. Action closed.

Resolution: To continue to Azalea Landscapes contract with eight extra cuts during the growing season if necessary.

Action: Cllr Brooks to tell Azalea Landscapes about the decision.

- iv. PC29/71 – Conservation Area Appraisal. The minutes of the meeting with the Conservation Officer have been forwarded and Sarah Hanfrey and Laura Lucas have agreed to continue working on the Conservation Area Appraisal. Action 71 can be closed. They will be providing information on how to proceed and with a timeframe and approach at a later meeting. Action PC 29 will remain Open.
- v. PC 86 – Contribution from Parish Council towards Pre-school fete. It was agreed to fund all of the requested items, First Aid, Bertie Slippers, raffle tickets and fee for use of cricket club barbeque at a cost of £470, plus £470 to fund Lesley Maynard’s Band for a total of £720. The PC agreed to loan the Village Hall tables and chairs at no charge. Action closed.
- vi. PC87 – Decision on funding music for pre-school fun day. It was agreed to fund the cost of Leslie Maynard and band at a cost of £250. Action closed.
- vii. PC92 - Cllr Higley has been investigating opportunities related to reducing traffic and pollution on Eastfield lane including a potential recommendation to use a “Walking Bus” as an option to reduce traffic and pollution. She needs more time to complete her survey. At the meeting a parent from the Pre-School indicated that parents who drive their children to school generally do this as it is on their way to work.

5. Review Planning Applications

- i. P19/S0343/HH, Hopton, Manor Road. Planning for a second drive had been granted in 1985 and this information had been passed to the parish council by the current residents. The access point is now being used more regularly. The pavements have been damaged and the owner has agreed to make good the damage once work has been completed.
Action: Check with the SODC and the owner when the work on adding the second access drive and dropping the kerb was completed.
- ii. P19/S0671/FUL, Lane End, Eastfield Lane. Currently no objections have been listed on the SODC website although one neighbour told us that it would overlook their property. It was agreed the development was significantly larger than the existing property and would overlook at least one property and potentially the school. Councillors felt the plan was overdevelopment of the plot.
Resolution: The Parish Council unanimously voted to object to the planning request as it is overdevelopment of the plot and will overlook at least one property.

6. Receive County Councillor's report

Councillor Bulmer did not attend the meeting but a report was sent through. Key points from the report include:

Youth Provision across Oxfordshire has been given a £1 million boost in funding. Youth groups will be invited to make bids to access the funds over a two-year period and encouraged to match fund from their local communities.

The approved Budget has included funding for highway improvements, new school buildings and energy efficient street lighting.

OCC will be spending an extra £13m on road maintenance, this is on top of the existing £18.5m. This money will be used for resurfacing, drainage, bridge repairs and footways.

The full report is on the village website.

7. Finances

- i. Approve payments and note receipts for the previous month.

Payment	Amount	Receipt	Amount
Clerk's salary		P. Spender bulletin	£40.00
Dog sign – reimburse clerk	£3.65		
Rialtas – Clerk training	£108.00		
Radar surveys	£360.00		
AV Asbestos	£264.00		
Total	£735.65		£40.00

- ii. Current bank reconciliation noted and signed off.
- iii. The asbestos survey on the village hall had come through as clear. Cllr Brooks suggested the cost of the survey could be part of the £1,000 donation the Parish Council make to the Village Hall.
- iv. It was agreed the dog sign should be put up at the entrance to the park. It was noted the gate to the park does not always close.

Resolution: The dog sign stating no dogs allowed in the park should go up.

Action: Cllr Brooks would check the security of the gate to see if there is a reason it does not close easily and investigate use of a spring or other measure.

Resolution: The Parish Clerk to send through information showing the hours worked to Cllr Donahue and Cllr Hatcher each month.

8. Vacancy for Parish Councillor

The resignation of Cllr Hanfrey has been noted and the vacancy advertised on the noticeboard and website. It was agreed if there are any people interested in becoming a councilor they should be encouraged to stand for election.

Nomination papers must be in by 3rd April 2019 and the parish council will know by 4th April 2019 if there is to be a contested election.

9. TAPAG

- i. Parking on the Upper Narrows – Cllr Hatcher explained there had been some complaints last year about the level and impact on safety of parking in the Upper Narrows. The Police were also aware of the problem and have said they might start ticketing cars again. Cllr Hatcher and Will Barclay have produced a letter to give residents advanced warning. Cllr Hatcher read the letter out to the council and members of the public. Some minor amendments were suggested.

Resolution: The content of the letter was agreed by the Parish Council.

Action: Cllr Hatcher to re-draft the letter and send to the Parish Council and PCSO Barbara Taylor before sending to residents and putting on the windscreens of cars parked in the identified area.

- ii. To consider the best approach to traffic flow, safety and parking. Cllr Hatcher explained that the Village Plan questionnaire results confirmed that issues related to traffic and parking were the highest priority in the village. Many people living on the High Street have no off-road parking. The traffic surveys showed that some cars were parked for days on end. Traffic is at its highest flow during specific times of the day. To manage the flow of traffic, parking and safety there needs to be a joined-up set of improvements. Cllr Hatcher showed two diagrams, one with the current parking and the second with the same number of parking spaces but strategically placed to slow traffic down and facilitate passing. Parking spaces would be permanently marked bays and areas of no parking would be identified with yellow lines. The parked cars would become the traffic management scheme, slowing cars down to 20mph or less.
- TAPAG and the PC had previously appointed traffic consultant MODE to support consultations with OCC and detail its implementation. There have been meetings with MODE and another consultant from BP which have both supported the recommended improvements in the draft Village Plan. Delivery of the recommendations will be constrained by available budget, but the Village Plan cost assessment shows that current cost estimates can be accommodated in PC budget projections over the next three years. Schemes must be realistic and enforceable.
- Cllr Hatcher also explained there was the possibility of sharing traffic wardens between neighboring villages to reduce cost for enforcing residents parking.
- Cllr Higley stated the parking on Manor Road was causing potential damage to the trees. Cllr Beard stated much of the parking was commuters. More than 50% of the cars parked during the survey were non-residents.
- Parish Council approval was recommended to fund the next phase of the traffic consultant.
- Resolution:** The Parish Council approved the next phase of traffic Consultant MODE for a cost of £1,750 to help implement the recommendations.

10. Village Plan

The Village Plan was started on May 2016. The key areas identified by residents were traffic, parking and housing. Please see document at the end of the minutes for further details.

John Bradon started by explaining this was an opportunity to ask questions. Cllr Higley asked if there was a way of restricting the number of cars per household in terms of parking. Cllr Beard asked about parking permits for residents.

John Bradon wanted to check the Village Plan is going in the right direction. The plan recommendations are in order of priority. Traffic and Parking issues and improvement to pavements were of high concern. The community buildings, e.g. the new pavilion and village hall, were popular with residents and people wanted the village hall to be better maintained. There are plans to build a new pavilion.

The Community Emergency Plan is underway.

There is need for a volunteer to liaise with OCC using 'Fix My Street' to maintain the drains. There is also a need to develop a plan for managing the various 'open spaces'. Cllr Brooks already organizes playground and other improvements.

In terms of improving access to the river. The Parish Council owns the steps down to the river, Cllr Higley asked if there were any legal responsibilities regarding the ownership and public access. The Thames Scullers recently moved to the old Goring Gap Boathouse on Hardwick estate and will be offering learn to row courses for 11-18 year olds. They have agreed to allow access the river for the public via their jetty. Cllr Donahue

explained the owners of The Veg Shed were happy for people to park in the new 6-space car park and walk down to the river, within reason, but cars were not to be left there all day.

The Conservation Area Appraisal, information is currently being gathered by residents. If a consultant is appointed, as recommended by SODC, there will be a cost attached to this.

Community initiatives, a meal once a month has been suggested. Jean Marc Grosfort and Matilda Oppenheimer are both interested in the idea. The plan is to increase engagement from various groups within the community.

Cllr Donahue agreed to facilitate the Emergency Plan Group.

Cllr Beard agreed to be the Parish Council lead for The Pavilion with support from Cllr Donahue. Cllr Brooks had been working on this in terms of planning and now The Pavilion is moving to the fundraising phase.

The Village Plan's recommendations are projected to take place over a 3-year period. A summary of the 20 recommendations is provided in Attachment I of the minutes. The Village Plan team performed an assessment showing that the overall costs of the recommendations can be achieved using existing Parish Council reserves and projected revenue over the next 3 to 4 years. The Parish Council will also work to reduce the current estimates through additional grants and competitive supplier quotes.

It was agreed the John Bradon and the others involved have worked hard on the production of the plan.

Resolution: The Parish Council unanimously supported the 20 recommendations in The Village Plan and committed to their implementation.

11. Any Other Business

- i. The brick pillar that was recently damaged at the corner of Manor Road is owned by the Parish Council. Quotes are being sought for the repairs. The car auction company that caused the damage has agreed to pay for the repair. Another HGV was directed to Whitchurch on Thames from Cray's Pond and there is a need to work with Cray's Pond Parish Council to develop a solution.
- ii. The post storage box at the end of Manor Road is in a poor state of repair. It was also noted the telephone box and Royal Mail Storage box were in need of a coat of paint and we should look into the removal of the disused post storage box by the telephone box. The post box at the end of Hardwick Road is in a poor state of repair.
Action: Parish Clerk to contact the maintenance office for Royal Mail and request maintenance.
Action: Cllr Brooks and Cllr Beard to look at the telephone box and storage box and see what maintenance is required.
- iii. Cllr Donahue explained Iain Tolhurst has agreed to advise a team of volunteers to complete some refurbishment work on 'The Boat' on the High Street over the next month.

Meeting closed 10.00pm

Next Meeting 18th April

Attachment I – Village Plan 2019 Recommendations summary

Ref	Recommendation	Continued from 2009 Plan?	Total Cost (including Grants/ Fundraising)	Parish Council Contribution (over 3 years)	Difficulty/ Complexity	Steering Group Priority	Parish Council Lead - Working Group
1. Traffic and Parking Improvements:							
VP-1	Designated blocks for cars to park managing flow with yellow lines elsewhere.	2009	£ 12,000	£ 12,000	High	High	RH - TAPAG
VP-2	A mandatory speed limit of 20mph	2009	£ 6,000	£ 5,000	High	High	RH - TAPAG
VP-3	Residents parking restrictions		£ 5,000	£ 5,000	High	High	RH - TAPAG
VP-4	Improve verges and make extra parking		£ 5,000	£ 5,000	High	High	RH - TAPAG
VP-5	Create parking bay on east side of High Street.		£ 5,000	£ 5,000	High	High	RH - TAPAG
VP-6	2. Build New Pavilion		£ 208,370	£ 28,370	High	High	TBA - NH, CN, AA
VP-7	3. Make Village Hall Improvements	2009	£ 23,000	£ 3,000	High	High	KB - Hall Mgt Cttee, J-M G
4. Built Environment including pavements							
VP-8	Raised pavement at Ferryboat	2009	£ 10,000	£ 10,000	Medium	High	TBA - PC
VP-9	Resurface Hardwick Road pavements	2009	£ 15,400	£ 11,300	Low	Medium	TBA - PC
VP-10	Manor Road pavement improvements	2009	£ 7,700	£ 7,700	Low	Medium	TBA - PC

VP-11	Develop and maintain Village Emergency Plan		£	2,000	£	-	Low	Medium	TBA - Emergency Management Ctte
VP-12	Liaison person to maintain drains	2009	£	-	£	-	Medium	Medium	TBC
VP-13	Hardwick Road Verges and Footpath	2009	£	1,500	£	1,500	Medium	Medium	WoTHABS
5. Open Space Improvements:									
VP-14	Develop maintenance plan for 9 open space areas						Low	Medium	TBA - Plan Owners
VP-15	Polish Church Memorial Garden improvements		£	750	£	750	Low	Medium	KB - SW+
VP-16	Manor Road Play area improvements – needs cleaning (fences, sign, equipment), bench repaired.		£	1,000	£	1,000	Medium	Medium	KB + Volunteers
VP-17	River Access improvements		£	1,000	£	1,000	Medium	Medium	TBC
6. Update village Conservation area assessment									
VP-18			£	5,000	£	5,000	Medium	Medium	TBA with Team of Residents
7. Community initiatives									
VP-19	Set up Green Team						Medium	Medium	TBC
VP-20	Initiate Community Meal Netball, Rowing..		£	1,500	£	750	Low	Medium	TBC
			Total	£	310,220	£	102,370		